

Zimmerman's Store
305 Coleridge Avenue
Llysven Neighborhood
Altoona
Blair County
Pennsylvania

HABS No. PA-5886

HABS
PA
7-ALTO
159-

PHOTOGRAPHS
WRITTEN HISTORICAL AND DESCRIPTIVE DATA

Historic American Buildings Survey
National Park Service
Department of the Interior
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HISTORIC AMERICAN BUILDINGS SURVEY

ZIMMERMAN'S STORE

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Location: 305 Coleridge Avenue

Date of Erection: 1906

Description: Completely remodelled in the 1960s, this two-story, front-gabled, rectangular building, now covered in aluminum siding, bears little resemblance to the general merchandise store it was for nearly sixty years. The store entrance was recessed and centered in the west facade fronting on Coleridge Avenue, and flanked by display windows across the front of the building. Both the downstairs and the upstairs were open, without partition walls, and had pressed-tin ceilings. A cast iron, pot-bellied stove occupied the center of the store. The upstairs is now the offices of an architectural firm whose entrance is a small brick porch on the north side of the building. Downstairs are three small apartments, with separate stoops on the south side. A former stable at the rear of the property has lately been converted into a small residence.

History: The tax record for 1906 shows an unfinished store on this lot belonging to grocer Robert Zimmerman. The following year, the finished store was in the name of Frank L. Zimmerman, also a grocer. According to the 1906-07 city directory, Frank ran a store here and lived upstairs; Robert boarded at this address. Zimmie's, as Frank's store was known locally, was the primary retail and social center of Llysven for three generations: "If you couldn't find it in Zimmie's, you couldn't get it in Altoona." Frank Zimmerman sold everything from groceries to shoes to wheel barrows and paint, on credit, and kept a horse and wagon in the stable out back for home deliveries. In 1915 the Zimmermans moved out of the space above the store, which they had divided into "rooms" with temporary plywood partitions, and into their new house next door at No. 303. They continued to operate the store until Zimmie's death in 1963. His estate sold both properties to Carmen and Mary Catherine Patete. Carmen remodelled the upstairs of the old store to house the office of his engineering firm, and converted the downstairs into apartments. The Patetes sold the building to an architect in 1988.

Sources: Maps: 1909, 1920, 1932, 1951. City directories. Tax records. Deed books: 116/502, 153/426, 191/476, 205/152, 813/313, 1168/193.

Project Information: This report was part of a larger project to document the city of Altoona, Pennsylvania. The project was undertaken by the Historic American Buildings Survey/Historic American Engineering Record (HABS/HAER), Robert Kapsch, chief, at the request of America's Industrial Heritage Project (AIHP), Randy Cooley, director. An overview of the history of the city (HABS No. PA-5784) and an overview of Llysven (HABS No. PA-5787) provide context for these buildings as well as a comprehensive list of sources. See also additional HABS reports on buildings in the city and other neighborhoods.

This report was prepared by Kathy Edwards in the summer of 1989 under the supervision of Alison K. Hoagland, HABS historian, and Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian. Edwards's and other project historians' work was published as Railroad City: Four Historic Neighborhoods in Altoona, Pennsylvania (Washington, D.C.: HABS/HAER, National Park Service, 1990), edited by Kim E. Wallace, supervisory historian, and Sara Amy Leach, HABS historian.